

STARS AND STRIPES

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

Saddam sibling nabbed

BY CHRIS TOMLINSON
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The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — American commandos captured a half brother of Saddam Hussein on Thursday, the latest success in a campaign to round up insiders from the former regime. But the search for weapons of mass destruction was unlikely to succeed without help from Iraqis, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said.

Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, briefing reporters at U.S. Central Command in Qatar, announced the capture of Barzan Ibrahim Hasan al-Tikriti, telling reporters he was an adviser to Saddam "with extensive knowledge of the regime's inner workings." He was captured in Baghdad in an operation by U.S. Special Forces and Marines.

Barzan Ibrahim was a representative to the United Nations in Geneva from 1989 to 1998. Earlier, from 1979 to 1983, he headed Iraq's Mukhabarat intelligence service, a period when the organization arranged executions of regime opponents in Iraq and overseas, a U.S. intelligence official said.

Another of Saddam's three half brothers, Watban Ibrahim Hasan al-Tikriti, was captured earlier by U.S. forces. The third has not been found.

Rumsfeld acknowledged difficulties in finding weapons of mass destruction — a chief reason U.S. President Bush gave for the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq that began March 20.

"I don't think we'll discover anything, myself," Rumsfeld said at a meeting with Pentagon employees. "I think what will happen is we'll discover people who will tell us where to go find it."

U.S. troops have found suspicious chemicals and facilities at a number of sites but tests have proved negative or inconclusive.

Meanwhile, with the fighting all but over, the USS Constellation steamed from the Persian Gulf for its home port of San Diego, where it is scheduled to be retired soon. It was the second aircraft carrier ordered home in recent days.

As U.S. forces struggled to restore order in Iraq, FBI Director Robert Mueller announced that agents had been detailed to help recover antiquities looted from museums in Baghdad and elsewhere.

Agents will aid international efforts to recover stolen items "on both the open and black markets," he said.

American forces have been criticized for failing to stop looting in several Iraqi cities, and there have been complaints, as well, that humanitarian relief has been slow in arriving.

But Marines foiled a brazen act of lawlessness during the day when they interrupted a robbery-in-progress at a branch of the al-Rashid Bank and took away \$4 million for safekeeping.

Thieves had blown a hole in the vault and dropped children in to



DAVID GUTTENFELDER/AP

U.S. special operations forces detain and question suspected robbers outside a Baghdad bank Thursday. Baghdad's banking district remains one of the last centers of attraction for looters attempting to cart off millions remaining in the vaults of the capital's institutions.

bring out fistfuls of cash. As word spread that the robbery was under way, Iraqis gathered, saying they had accounts at the branch, and a riot broke out.

Marines broke it up — over the protests of Iraqis not involved in the robbery — and the thieves were arrested.

"These people want the money and they believe it is rightfully their money, but they don't understand that the proper distribution is not first-come, first-served," said Col. Philip DeCamp, a battalion commander.

Army Gen. Tommy R. Franks, the commander of Operation Iraqi Freedom, told reporters during a visit to Kuwait that "the looting goes down every day and I think you will continue to see it go down because the Iraqis are now stepping up and controlling the problems for themselves."

There was evidence of slow progress. Baghdad residents gathered outside the city's police academy when word spread that some of the cars looted in recent days had been recovered.

Still, more than a week after the regime collapsed, Marine Staff Sgt. Jose Guillen said power has been restored — by use of diesel plants — to only about 500 homes in Baghdad, a city of roughly 5 million. He said U.S. forces expect to get one of the city's power grids on line by Friday.

Unrest continued in other parts of the country. Americans sought to bring calm to Mosul, where U.S. troops killed 17 people in clashes earlier in the week.

Brooks, briefing reporters at the U.S. Central Command headquar-

ters, also disclosed that Marines had broken up violent clashes on Wednesday in Tikrit, Saddam's hometown. The fighting broke out between club-wielding members of the former ruler's clan and a rival group, he said.

Clan rivalries aside, there are numerous other resentments shaping events in the post-Saddam era. Majority Shiite Muslims are eager for power after decades of Saddam favoring Sunni Muslims, for example. And Kurds are eager to claim what they say Saddam took from them and gave to Arab Iraqis in the northern part of the country.

International experts, appalled at the looting of Iraqi historical artifacts, met in Paris under U.N. auspices and called for a temporary embargo on Iraqi cultural objects.

Some of the participants at the meeting said it appeared the looting was organized, and some of those involved had keys to museum vaults and were able to remove items from safes.

One suggested the effort was organized from outside Iraq.

"It looks as if part of the looting was a deliberate planned action," said McGuire Gibson, a University of Chicago professor and president of the American Association for Research in Baghdad.

"I have a suspicion it was organized outside the country, in fact I'm pretty sure it was," Gibson said. He added that if a good police team was put together, "I think it could be cracked in no time."

The Baghdad museum housed irreplaceable Babylonian, Sumerian and Assyrian collections that chronicled ancient life in the cradle of civilization, the area around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Separation, danger pay increased

BY TOM PHILPOTT

Special to Stars and Stripes

President Bush signed a wartime defense supplemental bill Wednesday that raises military Family Separation Allowance by \$150 a month and Imminent Danger Pay by \$75 a month, retroactive to Oct. 1.

Almost 200,000 servicemembers drawing Family Separation Allowance will see the pay jump from \$100 a month to \$250. Anyone eligible for FSA back through October will receive back pay as soon as military finance centers can implement the change.

At least 250,000 military personnel draw Imminent Danger Pay of \$150 a month. That will rise, by 50 percent, to \$225, and again the increase will be retroactive to October.

These increases constitute a kind of \$800 million "thank you" to servicemembers from a grateful Congress. Rather than limit their gratitude to the warriors who drove Saddam Hussein from power, however, Congress raised the pay of any member assigned to a dangerous area overseas or forced to live away from family longer than 30 days at a stretch.

The Senate designed the special pay increases to expire Sept. 30, unless the Hill's armed services committees, which will have more time to study the cost and logic of these changes, agree to make them permanent when they work to shape the fiscal 2004 defense authorization bill later this year.

Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, introduced the special pays amendment as part of the \$79 billion wartime supplemental bill.

Stevens had warned colleagues against making the changes permanent in their rush to pass an emergency supplemental. New pay initiatives are under the jurisdiction of the armed services committees. Also the special pay initiatives could add hundreds of millions of dollars to future defense budgets, money the services might prefer to spend on other purposes.

"This is a large increase in costs for personnel and I fully support that," Stevens said. If only this were a nation of billionaires, he added, "we could pay our military what they really deserve for being overseas, what they really deserve for their families when one or both parents are overseas."

The House wartime supplemental made no mention of special pay increases but House members embraced the Senate plan when a conference committee met Saturday to work out bill differences. Defense officials suggested an alternative to raising FSA and IDP, arguing that most recipients will not have served in Iraq. Congress instead could raise Hostile Fire Pay, a more specific form of danger pay, which would end with hostilities. FSA, by contrast, will be paid at the higher rate whether or not there's a war, and IDP is paid in many areas besides Iraq and Kuwait, including Bosnia and Kosovo.

In the end, Congress added \$4 billion to the \$74.7 billion emergency supplemental sought by President Bush. Twenty percent of that added cost can be traced to special pay raises.

The supplemental also broadens in two ways service authority to assist servicemembers who become ill or injured in the war in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

The first allows the services to buy for ill or injured returnees up to \$250 in clothing, either because civilian attire is needed to return home on commercial aircraft or because uniforms were destroyed in combat or during medical treatment. The \$250 is a procurement cap, not an allowance.

A second clarifying provision allows payment of travel allowances to family members who visit loved ones hospitalized for wounds or illness suffered in the war. Payment of family travel allowances had been based on a medical determination that such visits would improve a patient's health.

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Latest developments

■ U.S. Special Forces captured Barzan Ibrahim Hasan Al-Tikriti, who is one of three half brothers of Saddam Hussein and a presidential adviser with "extensive knowledge of the regime's workings," U.S. Central Command said.

■ A riot broke out at a Baghdad bank after thieves blew a hole in the vault and dropped children in to bring out fistfuls of cash. U.S. troops calmed the crowd by arresting the thieves and removing \$4 million in U.S. dollars for safekeeping.

■ Near Saddam's hometown of Tikrit, U.S. Marines broke up clashes between club-wielding members of Saddam's clan and rivals from the countryside who had come to the city for food.

■ In Mosul, U.S. commanders tried to ease anti-American anger after two days of confrontations involving U.S. Marines. Local hospital officials said 17 people were killed in clashes with Marines.

■ In Kirkuk, Arab families said groups of Kurds have forced them out of their homes and claimed ownership in the largely Kurdish city.

■ President Bush urged the United Nations to lift economic sanctions against Iraq as the American officials charged with leading the reconstruction prepared to move into the country.

■ A second U.S. Navy aircraft carrier departed the Persian Gulf, leaving only the USS Nimitz battle group, U.S. officials said.

■ Hans Blix, the chief U.N. weapons inspector for Iraq, urged the U.S.-led coalition to allow his team back into the country, saying it would increase the credibility of any discoveries.

■ Looters who stole Iraqi antiques from the national museum had keys to the vaults and opened safes, suggesting they were professionals, experts said in Paris.

■ European leaders reiterated calls for a central role for the United Nations in rebuilding Iraq as they sought to heal the bitter split over the U.S.-led war.

From The Associated Press

Nimitz only battle group left in Gulf

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A second U.S. Navy aircraft carrier departed the Persian Gulf on Thursday, leaving only the USS Nimitz battle group on station in the Gulf, defense officials.

With the air campaign winding down, both the Navy and the Air Force are bringing aircraft home to allow pilots and crews a respite after one of the most intense air campaigns in history.

The USS Constellation, on its final overseas mission before going into retirement, left the Gulf Thursday, one day after the carrier USS Kitty Hawk departed for its homeport in Yokosuka, Japan, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Two other carriers that participated in the air war from positions in the eastern Mediterranean — the USS Harry S. Truman and the USS Theodore Roosevelt — are going to alternate on port visits in the Mediterranean in coming days but not head home yet, the officials said.

States

Children's slaying: A grand jury has indicted a couple on capital murder charges in the slayings and decapitations of their three children.

Maria Angela Camacho, the children's mother, and her common-law husband, John Allen Rubio, were each charged Wednesday with four counts of capital murder.

Camacho, 23, a Mexican citizen, and Rubio, 22, of Brownsville have been in Cameron County jail without bond and under suicide watch since police found them in their apartment March 11 with the three bodies, all decapitated and two of three stuffed into a black trash bag. An arraignment hearing is scheduled for later this month.

D.C.-area sniper case: Sniper suspect Lee Boyd Malvo is facing more disciplinary action in jail after allegedly writing a letter to another inmate saying that a deputy sheriff should be "fatally injured," jail officials said.

Malvo, 18, is being held at the Fairfax County jail on capital murder charges in the Oct. 14 shooting of Linda Franklin, 47, outside a store.

Malvo, a Jamaican, and John Allen Muhammad, 42, have been linked to 20 shootings last year, including 13 deaths, in Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana and the District of Columbia.

In the letter, Malvo wrote of a deputy that "someone should ensure that boy is fatally injured."

Northern spotted owl: The northern spotted owl population in Washington state continues to drop, experts say, despite federal efforts to protect the threatened species.

The number of spotted owls dropped by 5 percent to 8 percent annually between 1992 and 2002, even though the Forest Service tightened logging practices on public lands nearly a decade ago.

Family murder: A man described by prosecutors as a con artist with a taste for the good life was sentenced to death Wednesday for killing his wife and three young children.

Jurors, who began the penalty phase late Tuesday, deliberated for about five hours. The same jury earlier convicted Christian Longo, 29, for the murder of his son, 4-year-old Zachery, and 3-year-old daughter Sadie. Longo previously had pleaded guilty to killing his wife, MaryJane, 34, and 2-year-old daughter Madison.

Ohio State fire: Police said Thursday that they have a warrant to search a vehicle but they have no suspects or motive yet in their investigation into an arson fire that killed five college students.

The warrant was sealed, and Detective Pat Dorn wouldn't release details or say if the search had been carried out.

Police have set up a tip line, interviewed people in neighboring houses near the University of Ohio campus and passed out fliers advertising the now \$20,000 reward for information.

They also asked for any videotapes or photos of the fire or the birthday party that had ended at the house about an hour before the blaze.

War on terrorism

Afghan weapons' cache: Coalition forces have found three caches of heavy ammunition, including anti-tank rockets, anti-aircraft rounds and rocket-propelled grenades in southeast Afghanistan, an army spokesman said Thursday.

The U.S. Task Force Devil found 271 rocket-propelled grenades, four RPG launchers, 40 mortar rounds and hundreds of cases of ammunition for heavy machine guns in the village of Khar Bolah in Ghazni province Wednesday, Army spokesman Col. Roger King told a news briefing. Khar Bolah is 50 miles south of the capital, Kabul.

Romanian troops found two other caches of unspecified amounts of grenades and 107 mm rockets near the

News tracker: What's new with old news

town of Qalat in Zabul province, he said. Qalat is about 220 miles southwest of Kabul.

Both operations are part of an intensified hunt for weapons hidden by the remnants of al-Qaida or the ousted Taliban regime for use against coalition forces.

Guantanamo detainee: Doctors are reviewing the condition of a detainee who has been on life support for three months since attempting suicide at Guantanamo Bay naval base in Cuba, U.S. officials said Wednesday.

The detainee, one of about 660 from some 42 countries held at the U.S. base, has been kept alive on a respirator and fed intravenously since suffering severe brain damage when he tried to hang himself Jan. 16.

U.S. officials, in cooperation with the government of the man's home country, will decide whether to continue his care, terminate life support or send him back to his home country, Pentagon spokeswoman Lt. Cmdr. Barbara Burfeind said.

The military says the detainee is one of 17 who have made attempts to kill themselves while being held on suspicions they are linked to al-Qaida or the ousted Afghan Taliban regime.

World

Chechnya conflict: A top official in Chechnya's Moscow-backed government said Thursday that prosecutors had investigated hundreds of kidnapping cases involving Russian troops last year, but said the figures were "nothing out of the ordinary."

Chechen Prime Minister Anatoly Popov said he was not familiar with a report by Human Rights Watch, claiming that 1,123 civilians were killed last year. The New York-based organization said 70 civilians were killed and more than 100 disappeared in the first two months of 2003.

IRA peace talks: Northern Ireland's main Protestant extremist group reopened disarmament talks Wednesday, but doubts grew over the Irish Republican Army's professed willingness to make decisive peace moves.

Representatives of the Ulster Defense Association met John de Chastelain, the retired Canadian general who since 1997 has been trying to persuade the UDA, IRA and Northern Ireland's other illegal paramilitary groups to disarm.

Philippines fighting: Government troops killed eight Muslim rebels in a fierce gunbattle along a strategic road near a former guerrilla stronghold in the southern Philippines, an official said Wednesday.

Two soldiers were injured in Tuesday's fighting in Matanog town near Camp Abubakar, the former headquarters of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front seized by the military three years ago, said army Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga.

Vieques investigation: A delegation of Puerto Ricans has asked the U.N. Human Rights Commission to investigate the contamination of lands on Vieques as the U.S. Navy prepares to leave the Puerto Rican island, a lawyer said Wednesday.

Four opponents of the Navy's decades of bombing said they made the request during a visit to Geneva earlier this month. They said they also asked the U.N. body to put pressure on the United States to turn over the lands to Puerto Rico's government — not the U.S. Interior Department as planned.

China SARS cases: In a series of unsettling revelations, a World Health Organization team disclosed on Wednesday that there are previously unreported cases of the deadly SARS virus in Beijing and that investigators have been barred by the military from releasing details.

A WHO official also said that the capital city may have as many as 200 "probable cases," even as new infections were reported in Ningxia, a northwest region hundreds of miles away.

The unreported cases come from hos-

pitals run by China's secretive military, which "seems to have its own system of reporting," said Dr. Wolfgang Preisler, a German member of the WHO team.

He added that the team had been banned by the military from revealing details of their visits to Nos. 301 and 309 hospitals, where rumors of unreported cases were fueled last week by a senior Chinese military surgeon who said Beijing had several times as many SARS cases as had been reported.

Holocaust message found: A poignant message of homesickness hidden inside the walls of a former Nazi concentration camp in Oranienburg, Germany, in 1944 by an imprisoned German communist and a deported Polish student has been unearthed by construction workers.

The message was found April 2 concealed in a bottle inside a hollow wall of the former Sachsenhausen commander's office, Guenter Morsch, the director of the camp memorial site, said Wednesday.

"I want to go home. When will I see my loved ones in Cologne again?" the German prisoner wrote in the letter dated April 19, 1944. "But my spirit is unbroken. Things must get better soon."

The prisoner, a bricklayer, was identified only as Anton E. by officials, who withheld his full name out of concern for the privacy of his ailing widow.

Anton E. was arrested in 1934 for resistance against Nazism and held at Sachsenhausen from 1937 until its liberation in 1945. He then returned home after World War II and died in the early 1980s.

The letter also was signed by Tadeusz Witkowski, a Pole deported to Sachsenhausen in 1940 because he participated in an underground study group after the Nazis shut down his school in occupied Poland.

Witkowski was freed from a Nazi "death march" by U.S. troops at the end of the war and is believed to have emigrated to the United States or Canada.

Military

Mountain renaming: A proposal to rename an Arizona mountain after an American Indian killed in Iraq has led to a surprisingly nasty fight between the Democratic governor and Republican lawmakers.

Gov. Janet Napolitano says she wants to honor Army Pfc. Lori Piestewa, a Hopi from northeastern Arizona who was the first military servicewoman to die in the war. The plan would also settle complaints about Phoenix's Squaw Peak, a name many Indians find offensive.

But Napolitano has run into opposition from the board that oversees official state names and criticism from conservative lawmakers who say she's using Piestewa's death as political leverage.

Piestewa was one of the few American Indian women in the armed forces.

Business

American Airlines' agreement: American Airlines flight attendants have accepted \$340 million in labor concessions, but the world's largest carrier says it still faces the possibility of bankruptcy.

American's chairman and CEO, Donald J. Carty, praised the deals but said the economy and other factors affecting business were beyond the company's control.

The vote marked a reversal from a day earlier, when flight attendants narrowly rejected the package of layoffs, wage cuts and reduced benefits. They were given an extra day to vote after some workers complained about trouble voting online and by telephone.

The Association of Professional Flight Attendants said 10,761 votes were cast for the concessions package and 9,652 against. On Tuesday, the package was losing by fewer than 500 votes.

From wire services

News from around the war

GI in 1st AD killed in Iraq

BAUMHOLDER, Germany — A Baumholder-based 1st Armored Division soldier was killed and another was critically wounded Monday in Iraq. The incident occurred when a soldier in a Bradley fighting vehicle accidentally fired a 25 mm cannon during maintenance, according to U.S. Central Command officials.

Pfc. Joseph Mayek, 20, of Rock Springs, Wyo., apparently is the first Germany-based soldier to die in Iraq since the war began March 20.

CENTCOM officials had not identified the wounded soldier pending notification of his family. The soldier was evacuated for treatment, but his condition is unknown, according to CENTCOM officials.

Both soldiers were from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment at Baumholder.

Clans clash in Tikrit

TIKRIT, Iraq — Clashes broke out between club-wielding members of Saddam Hussein's clan and rivals from other groups near his hometown of Tikrit, forcing U.S. Marines to step in to separate the sides, a U.S. military officer said Thursday.

Tensions erupted Wednesday when people from outlying villages came to warehouses where officials had distributed food rations before the war, said Lt. Col. Freddie Blish, the operations officer for Marine Wing Support Group 37.

Eight individuals belonging to Saddam's clan and armed with clubs attacked three men in a pickup truck who were taking rice, sugar and milk, Blish said. In a second incident, 10 people attacked two people in a car.

In both cases, the Marines stepped in to disarm the men and separate the two sides. There are six different clans in the Tikrit area, where Saddam's family dominates.

Kurds help U.S. restore order

SALAHUDDIN, Iraq — Kurdish soldiers were helping U.S. troops bring security to the ethnically mixed city of Mosul, where at least 17 people have been killed in shootings involving the Americans, a Kurdish leader said on Thursday.

"There are still pockets of resistance. There are die-hard Baath Party members and weapons," Hoshiyar Zebari of the Kurdish Democratic Party told a news conference at the party's mountain stronghold in northern Iraq.

"The concerns now are to get some authority in Mosul and Kirkuk," the two major northern Iraqi cities, which had been held by the Baghdad government and fell last week to Kurdish and American forces.

U.S. forces shot Iraqi civilians in Mosul on Tuesday when a crowd grew violent, and again on Wednesday during a looting of the Central Bank. Hospital administrators said 17 people had been killed.

Zebari said several senior members of ex-President Saddam Hussein's leadership were still at large in the western, Arab part of Mosul.

"We're trying with the help of U.S. forces to get hold of more," Zebari said.

Ex-POWs arrive in Germany

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Seven former POWs were "doing really well" Thursday at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, where they were taken after arriving Wednesday night from Kuwait, a hospital spokeswoman said.

"They are in good spirits. They went and ate lunch at the dining facility today," said Marie Shaw, hospital spokeswoman.

All except Spc. Shoshana Johnson, who is in a wheelchair with wounds to her feet, are fit enough to walk, Shaw said.

The two Apache helicopter pilots and five soldiers from a maintenance unit were found Sunday by U.S. forces heading toward Tikrit, Iraq. Initially cared for in a U.S. hospital in Kuwait, the seven will be treated for wounds and debriefed by counselors at Landstuhl before heading home to the United States.

As six of the soldiers walked toward a waiting bus, they waved at news media. One Apache pilot, Chief Warrant Officer David S. Williams, lifted his arms over his head like a boxer who had just won a match.

The freed 507th soldiers who arrived in Germany are Spc. Edgar Hernandez, 21, of Mission, Texas, who was reportedly shot in the elbow; Spc. Joseph Hudson, 23, of Alamogordo, N.M.; Pfc. Patrick Miller, 23, of Park City, Kan.; and Sgt. James Riley, 31, of Pennsauken, N.J.

The freed pilots, from the 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, are Williams of Orlando, Fla., and Chief Warrant Officer Ronald D. Young, 26, of Lithia Springs, Ga. Their Apache attack helicopter was forced to land in a field southwest of Baghdad.

The C-141 also carried about 50 other ill or wounded soldiers from Iraq to the hospital.

Lynch donations overwhelm hospital

WASHINGTON — Overwhelmed by well-wishers, Army Pfc. Jessica Lynch, the American prisoner of war who gripped much public attention since her rescue in Iraq, has asked supporters to ease up on sending stuff to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where she is recuperating.

Lynch and her family have asked donations instead be made to charity organizations, including the Army Emergency Relief, Air Force Aid Society, Navy & Marine Corps Aid Society, American Red Cross, the United Services Organization and the Fisher House Foundation. These groups have a history of helping servicemembers, according to a press statement released by the hospital on Lynch's behalf.

Letters and cards still are being accepted and can be mailed to this address:

Pfc. Jessica Lynch, c/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center, 6900 Georgia Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20307-5001.

Personal mail for other members of the Lynch family can be sent care of the Post Office, Palestine, WV, 26160. No post office box number or other address is necessary.

Truck driver admits driving into GIs

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait — The man who drove his pickup into several U.S. soldiers who were standing in line at the post exchange on Camp Udairi told a judge Tuesday he did not plan to kill them.

Lutfi Mohammed Mahmoud Al-Barbari admitted he drove the truck into the soldiers on March 30, but said, "I was mentally upset when Arab satellite channels beamed pictures of the American war on Iraq," according to a report in the Arab Times, an English-language daily newspaper published in Kuwait.

Fifteen soldiers were injured when the truck struck the soldiers. Other troops opened fire and shot Al-Barbari twice, wounding him. Al-Barbari asked for mercy and was taken into custody.

Of the 15 U.S. soldiers injured, one suffered a knee injury and was airlifted to Germany for treatment while the remaining 14 had minor scrapes and resumed their duties almost immediately, a U.S. military spokesman said at the time.

Rumsfeld: Iraqis' help needed

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military's search for chemical and biological weapons is unlikely to succeed until Iraqis lead American forces to them, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Thursday.

"I don't think we'll discover anything, myself," Rumsfeld said at a town hall-style meeting with Pentagon employees. "I think what will happen is we'll discover people who will tell us where to go find it. It is not like a treasure hunt where you just run around looking everywhere, hoping you find something."

Syria says it welcomes Powell visit

CAIRO, Egypt — Syria's foreign minister welcomed Secretary of State Colin Powell's upcoming visit Thursday as a "goodwill gesture" after weeks of rising tension, but said U.N. inspectors would not be allowed in to look for the chemical weapons Washington alleges Syria has.

At a news conference after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara also warned the United States against a lengthy occupation in Iraq.

"We are facing a dangerous transformation and the occupation of an Arab country, Iraq," Shara said. "We have said that occupation is rejected by the majority, if not all, of the Iraqi people and the days ahead will prove this."

In recent days, top U.S. officials have accused Syria of providing Iraq with war materiel, giving haven to senior Iraqi officials and terrorist groups, and permitting foreign fighters to join the war against the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq.

U.S. forces have also shut down a pipeline used for illegal oil shipments from Iraq to Syria.

No definitive count for Iraq's dead

CAMP AS SAYLIYAH, Qatar — In contrast to the precise count of U.S. and British war dead, there is no good estimate of the number of Iraqis who died in battle, although it is believed to be far greater than that of coalition forces.

As the war progressed, most claims of Iraqi casualties came from former Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, who chronicled civilian deaths daily but gave no numbers for soldiers.

Military analysts say figures that have surfaced so far — such as the 2,000 to 3,000 Iraqi fighters believed killed during the first U.S. foray into Baghdad — are simply estimates.

Efforts to calculate the Iraqi toll are complicated by the fact that many soldiers were buried in unmarked graves; others are still covered by piles of rubble.

The coalition counts 125 dead and three missing among the U.S. troops, and 31 dead among the British.

Iraqi interviews done in U.S.

WASHINGTON — The FBI has wrapped up its wartime interviews with almost 11,000 Iraqis living in the United States and will resume its prime focus on combating terrorism now that the war in Iraq is winding down.

The interviews, which began March 20, were conducted around the clock by hundreds of FBI agents and focused on Iraqis who had ties to the former regime of Saddam Hussein and those who had recently traveled to Iraq.

While several dozen were detained for visa violations, no known terrorists or Iraqi spies were discovered in the interviews.

Instead, FBI officials say, the interviews yielded important information for U.S. forces, including locations of Iraqi bunkers, tunnel systems, manufacturing plants and military installations.

Arab Web sites attacked

DOHA, Qatar — The war in Iraq set off a rash of on-line vandalism against Arab Web sites, site administrators and security experts say, with dozens of Web sites attacked.

At Islamonline.net, one of the most popular destinations for reports and analysis on Islamic affairs, traffic doubled after U.S. forces invaded Iraq. So did cyberattacks, which reached 250 a day, according to Mutiullah Ta'eb, the site's general coordinator.

Another attack put Arabia.com, a Dubai-based Web site, off line the third day of the war.

Jordan becomes hub for Iraqi aid

AMMAN, Jordan — A plane loaded with 31.42 tons of humanitarian supplies from medicine to blankets arrived Thursday in Jordan, as aid agencies and governments turn the desert kingdom into a major supply route for aid to Iraq.

The shipment from the French government and aid groups also contained drinking water, nutritional supplements and medical supplies — part of the \$10.7 million France has pledged in aid for Iraq, said Aline Lenormand, press counselor at the French Embassy in Amman.

The aid will be delivered to Iraq by French aid agencies over the next few days, Lenormand said.

Riot breaks out in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A riot broke out at a Baghdad bank Thursday after thieves blew a hole in the vault and dropped children in to bring out fistfuls of cash. U.S. troops arrested the thieves and removed \$4 million in U.S. dollars for safekeeping.

The incident — part of the lawlessness that has broken out in Baghdad with the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime — took place at a branch of the al-Rashid Bank. As word spread that the robbery was under way, many Iraqis gathered, demanding that the thieves hand over the money. Many of them had accounts at the bank.

"These people want the money, and they believe it is rightfully their money, but they don't understand that the proper distribution is not first-come, first-served," said U.S. Army Col. Philip DeCamp, a battalion commander.

Two men with Kalashnikov rifles shot over the heads of the crowd and ran for a nearby bridge. As the crowd grew larger and more agitated, a U.S. special operations patrol called in reinforcements, and an Army platoon arrived.

The soldiers arrested a dozen men inside the building, several of them teenagers. As the Americans brought out the thieves, most of the crowd cheered, chanting, "Good, good, mister!" while the parents of the teenagers wept and begged the soldiers to release them.

At one point, about 1,000 civilians surged around the 16 soldiers trying to secure the bank building. The soldiers cocked their rifles and charged at a group of men to get them to back away from their Bradley fighting vehicles.

One special operations officer found a resident who spoke English and had him use a loudspeaker to calm the crowd and ask them to move away from the troops. After the troops spread concertina wire around the bank entrance, most of the Iraqis wandered away.

From staff and wire reports

'This is not fun anymore!'

Copter pilots recall night battle behind enemy lines

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

U.S. ARMY AVIATION BASE CAMP, Central Iraq — The instant the bullet slammed into his throat, 1st Lt. Jason King and everyone in his squadron knew he must be dead.

King, the front-seat pilot and gunner in the AH-64D Apache Longbow, had been talking on the radio when the automatic rifle round pierced his cockpit during a battle late on the night of March 23. Everyone heard the bullet hit, they heard him choke out a curse, and then they heard the quiet.

King felt like the entire front of his throat had been shot off. He was bleeding badly, and he couldn't talk to his back-seat pilot, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mike Tomblin.

"I could hear what everybody was saying, but I couldn't say anything," he recalled. "I pretty much thought my number was up."

All of the Longbows from King's Germany-based unit, the 6th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, had come under heavy ground fire about 20 minutes after they left their base camp in central Iraq.

The 6-6 Cavalry and its two sister squadrons, the 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment and the 2nd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, flew from Camp Udairi, Kuwait, to a deserted Iraqi airstrip southwest of Najaf around sunset.

The 1-227th Aviation's small fuel and ammunition convoy had just reached the airstrip, which had not yet been secured by U.S. ground forces. The regiment's supply convoy had been held up by battles and invasion traffic and would not arrive until the next morning.

The fuel supply had been miscalculated. The 1-227th Aviation was able to send all 18 Longbows against its targets, but the 6-6 Cavalry could gas up only 13. At the last minute, the 2-6 Cavalry's mission was postponed for tactical reasons. But there wouldn't have been enough fuel, anyway.

"Everything was very confused," said Lt. Col. Scott Thompson, 42, of Bellevue, Neb., the 2-6 Cavalry's commander. "We were trying to refuel a regiment's worth of aircraft [about 60] in complete blackness."

A few dozen pilots and refuelers nervously set up a defense line with only their M-16s to protect them. They prayed the Iraqis wouldn't attack, because their aircraft lacked sufficient fuel for them to escape.

The mission ran into trouble from the start. The Longbows, heavy with fuel and weaponry, struggled to take off around midnight in the thick desert dust. One of 6-6 Cavalry's aircraft crashed on takeoff, and five others nearly did. Luckily, no one was hurt.

Apaches and other helicopters aren't well suited to urban warfare. They are excellent in the desert,

where they hug the ground to evade radar and can see targets clearly, even at night, and fire at them from a distance. But working in cities nullifies that advantage and magnifies their weakness: a vulnerability to ground fire.

Still, V Corps had expected to surprise the Iraqis with this strike against the Republican Guard's Medina Division 20 miles northeast of Al-Hillah, far behind enemy lines. They surely never anticipated gunfire seemingly from every house and building.

"We weren't nearly as nervous as we should have been," said King, 29, of Bellaire, Mich.

Well into the trip, the sporadic fire started to pick up. It surprised the pilots that so many people had their lights on so late at night. Then something happened that made them realize they faced a well-prepared opponent.

"As we were turning [toward the targets], all the lights in the city went out for about two seconds," King said. "Then they came back on, and [the gunfire] just erupted."

Every light in the city seemed to be shining directly upon them. The Longbows used their 30 mm rifles to try to suppress AK-47 and anti-aircraft fire that was so thick pilots later called it a "wall of steel," but they could hardly tell where it came from.

"It looked like a laser light show," Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jeffery Crownover, 32, a Troop B pilot, wrote the next day in a journal of the battle. "You could see the tracers with the naked eye passing within feet of the canopy and the aircraft. I continually made high-energy maneuvers to avoid being hit."

A bullet damaged the hydraulic system of King's and Tomblin's aircraft and took out the flight-management system, making it hard to handle.

About 65 minutes into the mission, a bullet punched through the cockpit and hit King in the throat.

In Apaches and Longbows, typically, the back-seater flies the aircraft while the front-seater fires the weapons. Now Tomblin, under intense fire and believing his partner dead, had to handle both jobs.

"I could hear the wind going through his cockpit," he said. "I had this picture in my head that his cockpit was decimated."

Apaches always fly at least in pairs, and Tomblin called on his wingmen — Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bob Duffney and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bill Neal — to help lay down suppressing fire. He thought about landing and transferring King to the UH-60 Black Hawk accompanying them, the policy in the case of serious injuries. But that seemed exceptionally risky in such hostile territory.

"You could tell he was very calm and collected," said Crownover, who was listening to Tomblin on the radio. "He didn't let the situation get to him."

About five minutes after King was hit, the shock

began to wear off. His voice came back a little. He told Tomblin he had managed to bandage his neck, and he started calling out sources of fire.

"I was real happy once he started talking," Tomblin recalled. "We had been flying for a long time, and we were still under fire. I said, 'This is not fun anymore!'"

The gunfire didn't subside for 45 minutes, until after King and Tomblin had reached open desert west of Najaf. They landed, and waited for their buddies to come home.

"I was really mad at that point," King said. "I got out and I started cussing, because I was a Longbow pilot who just got shot by small-arms fire. That was unacceptable."

King told the doctor at the camp he needed just a few stitches. But the doctor replied "No, son, you need surgery," King recalled.

But he refused to leave until the battle was through. He heard the bad news: The 1-227th Aviation had been mauled. One of its aircraft had been forced to land, and he later learned the two crewmen had been taken prisoner.

The 6-6 Cavalry had fared a bit better. All its aircraft returned to base and no one had been injured, but all of the aircraft had been damaged.

A Black Hawk took King to the 86th Combat Surgical Hospital at Camp Udairi, where doctors operated to remove shrapnel from his neck. Some of it, though, was so close to his carotid artery they had to leave it.

King found out they planned to send him to a hospital in Rota, Spain, to recuperate. His wife, Robin, made reservations to meet him there, but King insisted on returning to his squadron instead.

"I told my wife, I need to finish what I started," King explained. "One big thing was for [my squadron mates] to know that I'm all right, and for me to know that they are."

Also, he said, pointing at Tomblin, "I feel like I owe it to that guy over there."

King returned to Iraq a week later, and flew in combat again with Tomblin a few days later. Last weekend, they flew a daytime mission into the same neighborhood where they got shot at during the March 23. This time thousands of people waved as they flew over. They heard no gunfire.

Climbing back in the cockpit wasn't easy. "It was pretty unnerving. I was still jumpy," King said. "But I knew I had to do it, and I know I'd be better off once I did."

This week, the battle missions have ended. Eager two weeks ago to get to war, King now is thinking about home.

"I'll be glad when this is completely done," he said, "and I'm home again with my wife."

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Bush urges U.N. to lift sanctions against Iraq

BY MATT KELLEY

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush called for lifting economic sanctions against Iraq as commanders of both the U.S. military and the reconstruction effort prepared to move into the country.

The Bush administration was sending the message that not only has Iraq been liberated, it soon could be open for business.

"Now that Iraq is liberated, the United Nations should lift economic sanctions on that country," Bush said Wednesday during a visit to a fighter jet factory in St. Louis.

The removal of sanctions, particularly on oil sales, could help finance the reconstruction of Iraq.

Bush could face a rough road in the United Nations on that issue, however. U.N. diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Security Council members want a much better idea of what the world body's future role in Iraq will be before agreeing to any suspension or lifting of sanctions.

The sanctions imposed since Iraq's

Russian official: Bush request 'mercenary'

The Associated Press

MOSCOW — A prominent Russian legislator on Thursday criticized President Bush's proposal to lift United Nations sanctions on Iraq as "mercenary," the Interfax news agency reported.

With the U.S.-led coalition now in control of almost all of Iraq, Bush urged the United Nations on Wednesday to lift the sanctions that have choked Iraq's economy for nearly 13 years.

1990 invasion of Kuwait have throttled Iraq's economy.

Oil sales were supposed to be overseen by a U.N. panel that disbursed money for food, medicine and other humanitarian goods. But smuggling flourished, helping provide the luxury that U.S. troops have found in Saddam's palace compounds they now control.

The war's commander, Gen. Tommy Franks, briefed Bush from inside one of

those palaces Wednesday as Franks visited U.S. troops in Baghdad. In visible disgust at the opulence, Franks said, "It's the oil for palace program" — a biting reference to the U.N. oil-for-food effort.

At the Pentagon, Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal said Franks probably would move some sort of military headquarters operation into Iraq soon.

"Whether it will be located in Bagh-

dad proper, I can't say," McChrystal, vice director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters. "But at some point, I think as he transitions to the next phase, he would probably recommend and stand up that kind of headquarters and put it right within Iraq."

The head of U.S. reconstruction efforts in Iraq, retired Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, also is expected to move his headquarters into Iraq from Kuwait soon.

"The change of regime in Baghdad is not a condition for removing economic sanctions," the official said.

Saddam's half brother captured

BY DONNA BRYSON

The Associated Press

U.S. forces on Thursday captured Saddam Hussein's half brother Barzan Ibrahim Hasan, a former head of the secret police whose career proved that in Iraq, power was all in the family — Saddam's family.

Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, in a briefing at the U.S. Central Command camp in Qatar, said the 53-year-old Barzan was captured alone in Baghdad, and no casualties were sustained by the Special Forces who detained him or the U.S. Marines who supported them.

He was the second of Saddam's three half brothers to be taken into custody; former Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim Hasan was apprehended last week in Mosul in northern Iraq. The third, former security chief Sab'awi Ibrahim Hasan, is being sought, as are Saddam's sons Odai and Qusai.

Of the members of Saddam's immediate family, Barzan "might have been more diplomatic, more finan-

cially astute, but that's not saying much," said Charles Forrest of the International Campaign to Indict Iraqi War Criminals.

"He was a thug," Forrest said. Saddam's family formed a privileged inner circle of power, wealth and violence. But Barzan's career illustrates another fact of life in Saddam's Iraq: Being close to the president did not always mean being safe.

Over the years, the first family's feuds and rivalries have meant detention and even death for Saddam's brothers, sons or cousins. Hasan, who directed dozens of operations in Europe and elsewhere against Iraqi dissidents as head of Saddam's intelligence service from 1979 to 1983, later fell out of favor.

He served in the 1990s as Iraq's ambassador to U.N. agencies — including the U.N. human rights committee — in Geneva.

And he remained a presidential adviser at the time of his capture; he is one of 52 notorious members of Saddam's regime depicted on a deck of playing cards distributed to American soldiers. Forrest said Barzan likely can provide information on billions of dollars Saddam is believed to have hidden outside Iraq.

Half brothers killed, conspired for regime

By The Associated Press

Saddam Hussein has three half brothers from his mother's second marriage. They have been close to Saddam for most of the past three decades. Their willingness to kill and conspire for him, eliminating even members of their own extended clan, was one of the mainstays of the regime.

■ Barzan Ibrahim Hasan, captured Thursday: The youngest of Saddam's half brothers at 53, he served as head of Iraq's secret police, the dreaded Mukhabarat, and as Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva. In that position, he reportedly ran Iraq's intelligence operations in Europe.

Barzan was always Saddam's favorite among his half brothers. In 1974, while Saddam was Iraqi vice president, he got Barzan appointed head of the Mukhabarat. During his tenure, Barzan expanded Iraq's terror machine, carrying out dozens of operations in Europe and elsewhere against Iraqi dissidents.

At the end of the 1980s, Saddam appointed Barzan to the Geneva position. Barzan's rehabilitation appeared complete when he served in the Iraqi delegation that met U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Geneva in January 1991 in a last effort to head off the Gulf war.

Saddam recalled him from Switzerland in 1999, but his return to Baghdad was delayed for months, sparking rumors he wanted to defect. Relations between

Saddam's eldest son, Odai, and Barzan were known to be bad.

■ Sab'awi Ibrahim Hasan, believed to have fled: The middle half brother, Sab'awi was deputy chief of police in Iraq before Saddam demoted the three half brothers in 1983. As with the other two, he eventually regained Saddam's favor.

In 1989, Saddam appointed Sab'awi head of the Mukhabarat, the post Barzan had held until 1983. Sab'awi replaced Fadel Sefseeg, another Saddam cousin.

Sab'awi increased the range of the Mukhabarat until by 1990 the organization had a virtually unlimited budget and more than 100,000 staff and informers.

■ Watban Ibrahim Hasan, captured earlier: The eldest half brother, he served as Iraq's interior minister in the early 1990s, during which time he played a role in suppressing the Shiite Muslim rebellion in the south of the country.

U.S. officials said earlier this week that Watban had been captured near Mosul, apparently trying to flee to Syria.

In November 1991, Saddam named Watban interior minister. He went to southern Iraq to oversee the campaign to snuff out resistance by Shiite Muslim rebels who were holed up in the marshlands north of Basra.

By some reports, Saddam never had full confidence in Watban and kept a close watch on him. He dismissed Watban as interior minister in 1995, but retained him as a presidential adviser.

Looters were organized, had keys, experts say

BY JOCELYN GECKER

The Associated Press

PARIS — Some of the looters who ravaged Iraqi antiquities appeared highly organized and even had keys to museum vaults and were able to take pieces from safes, experts said Thursday at an international meeting.

One expert said he suspected the looting was organized outside the country.

The U.N. cultural agency gathered some 30 art experts and cultural historians in Paris on Thursday to assess the damage to Iraqi museums and libraries looted in the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion.

Although much of the looting was haphazard, experts said some of the thieves clearly knew what they were looking for and where to find it, suggesting they were prepared professionals.

"It looks as if part of the looting was a deliberate planned action," said McGuire Gibson, a University of Chicago professor and president of the American Association for Research in Baghdad.

"They were able to take keys for vaults and were able to take out important Mesopotamian materials put in safes."

"I have a suspicion it was organized outside the country, in fact I'm pretty sure it was," Gibson said. He added that if a good police team was put together, "I think it could be cracked in no time."

Cultural experts, curators and law enforcement officials are scrambling to both track down the missing antiquities and prevent further looting of the valuables.

The pillaging has ravaged the irreplaceable Babylo-

nian, Sumerian and Assyrian collections that chronicled ancient civilization in Mesopotamia, and the losses have triggered an impassioned outcry in cultural circles.

Many fear the stolen artifacts have been absorbed into highly organized trafficking rings that ferry the goods through a series of middlemen to collectors in Europe, the United States and Japan.

Officials at the UNESCO meeting at its headquarters in Paris said the information was still too sketchy to determine exactly what was missing and how many items were unaccounted for.

The experts, which included Iraqi art officials, said some of the most valuable pieces had been placed in the vault of the national bank after the 1991 Gulf War, but they had no information on whether the items were still there.

Koichiro Matsuura, director-general of the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, began the meeting Thursday by calling for a U.N. resolution imposing a temporary embargo on trade in Iraqi antiquities.

Matsuura said it was urgent to repair the antiquities that remain and to keep them from the hands of those who traffic in the lucrative market of stolen objects.

"It is always difficult, when communities are facing the consequences of an armed conflict ... to plead the case for preservation of the cultural heritage," Matsuura said.

Matsuura said he would ask U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to seek a resolution against illicit trafficking that would also impose an embargo "for a limited period" on the acquisition of Iraqi cultural objects. Such a resolution would also call for the return of such items to Iraq, he said.

Worried commanders preach vigilance after spate of fatal accidents

The Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — While combat between U.S. troops and Saddam Hussein's forces has subsided, ground commanders are concerned about a surge in accidental deaths and injuries involving American soldiers in Iraq.

Two soldiers were killed Monday when a grenade exploded inside a Humvee, and a soldier died when his truck — a monster rig used to carry tanks to staging areas — rear-ended another vehicle.

The deaths have prompted ground commanders in Iraq to emphasize to their men the need for safety and to avoid the temptation to relax now that heavy fighting is over.

"There have been a number of these, and the ground commanders are concerned about it, as they should be," said Lt. Col. Larry Cox, a U.S. military spokesman in Kuwait. "You really don't accept ground forces being injured other than in combat."

Among the 123 U.S. military deaths from March 21 through Tuesday, 36 have been classified as accidents. Among the 31 British deaths, 16 have been classified as accidental. Most were in helicopter or vehicle mishaps and non-combat firing of weapons.

The U.S. and British troops in Iraq have been on the move and under fire for weeks, leaving them tired and raising the potential for accidents.

In the accidents Monday, Cox confirmed that Spc. Thomas Foley, 23, of Dresden, Tenn., and Pfc. John Brown, 21, of Troy, Ala., were killed in the Humvee grenade explosion. Spc. Richard Goward, 32, of Midland, Mich., died in the rear-end collision.

Another soldier died from a bullet fired from his own gun.

Investigators are probing whether it was an accident or a suicide.

Air Force spouse found dead

NAPLES, Italy — An employee of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department at the Navy base in Naples was found dead Wednesday morning at a residence in Pozzuoli.

Paul E. Tralmer, 35, was the husband of an Air Force servicemember assigned to Allied Forces South.

A suspect was arrested late Wednesday in connection with the case, according to James Slater, the base's deputy public affairs officer. Slater would not release the suspect's name.

An earlier news release from the base's public affairs office stated that Italian police were holding the spouse of a Navy employee in connection with the death. Slater said the suspect was expected to be formally charged in the case Friday or this weekend during an Italian civilian court proceeding.

The case is being investigated by Italian police, with members of the Naval Criminal Investigation Service serving as translators, Slater said.

Ex-airman busted for living on base

KADENA AIR BASE, Okinawa — Okinawa City Police arrested an American on April 11 who they said has lived on Kadena Air Base for several years despite having neither U.S. military identification nor passport.

Douglas Wayne Hiller had been staying with various friends, living out of a suitcase on the air base, said an Okinawa City Police spokesman.

Hiller, formerly a senior airman attached to Kadena's 353rd Maintenance Squadron, left the Air Force in September 2000, said the spokesman. Kadena military police first apprehended Hiller, then turned him over to Okinawa police, the spokesman said.

As of Wednesday afternoon, Kadena's public affairs office had not responded to a Monday morning request for information on the case, including confirmation of Hiller's name, former rank or unit affiliation.

They also did not respond to requests for information on regulations governing base residents harboring people on the island without proper identification, or how such persons could gain entry to military installations.

Hiller still was in police custody Tuesday. The maximum punishment he could face for violating Japanese immigration laws is three years in prison and a fine of 300,000 yen, or about \$2,500, said the Okinawa police spokesman.

Local police typically detain immigration violators for several days, then deport those with no other criminal charges against them, said the spokesman.

Whenever local law enforcement authorities arrest Americans, they notify officials at the U.S. Consulate in Naha, said a U.S. government official. Privacy regulations do not allow the consulate to discuss specific cases, said the official.

From staff reports

Red Sox 6, Devil Rays 4

BOSTON — David Ortiz hit a tying, two-run single and Jeremy Giambi's RBI double put Boston ahead as the Red Sox rallied for four runs in the eighth inning to beat Tampa Bay on Wednesday.

Manny Ramirez and Nomar Garciaparra homered for Boston, which won its third straight game.

With the Red Sox trailing 4-2 in the eighth inning, Todd Walker drew a lead-off walk from Travis Harper. One out later, Ramirez singled off Lance Carter (3-1) and moved to second when left fielder Carl Crawford made an ill-advised throw to third.

Ortiz followed with a single up the middle to tie it.

Giambi drove in Hillenbrand, who walked, with a double off the center-field wall and scored on Trot Nixon's single to make it 6-4.

Chad Fox (1-2) pitched a scoreless inning of relief for the victory.

Blue Jays 7, Yankees 6

NEW YORK — Carlos Delgado hit a three-run homer and Dave Berg's RBI double broke a sixth-inning tie as Toronto beat New York to snap a six-game losing streak.

Toronto starter Cory Lidle (2-2) blew a 5-0 lead in the fifth, but the Blue Jays bounced back to beat New York for the first time in six meetings this season.

David Wells, who pitched a three-hit shutout against Minnesota in his last start and entered with a 0.53 ERA, gave up 11 hits and five runs in five innings.

American League

The Blue Jays took a 6-5 lead in the sixth on Berg's RBI double off little-used reliever Sterling Hitchcock (0-1), making just his second appearance of the season.

Orioles 4, Indians 3

CLEVELAND — Melvin Mora led off the ninth inning with his first home run of the season to give Baltimore a comeback victory over Cleveland.

Mora, batting .118 entering the ninth, hit a 2-1 pitch from Danys Baez 400 feet into the seats in left-center.

Baez (0-1) had blown a 3-2 lead in the eighth by walking Tony Batista for the tying run.

Buddy Groom (1-0) pitched 1²/₃ perfect innings, striking out two. Jorge Julio struck out pinch-hitter Bill Selby for the final out and his second save.

Milton Bradley singled in the first inning of Cleveland, extending his season-opening hitting streak to 14 games — longest by an Indians player since Toby Harrah hit in 14 straight to open 1982.

Twins 4, Tigers 2

MINNEAPOLIS — Corey Koskie had three hits and two RBIs, and Rick Reed combined with three relievers on a six-hitter as Minnesota beat Detroit for the 14th straight time.

The Tigers hadn't lost that many consecutive games to one opponent in

their 103-year history. They lost 13 straight to the Cleveland Indians from May 14, 1996, to May 3, 1997.

Reed (1-2) pitched six innings, giving up six hits and two runs with five strikeouts for Minnesota, which won its fifth consecutive game.

White Sox 4, Royals 3

CHICAGO — Frank Thomas foiled a shift with a sacrifice fly in the bottom off the ninth, and fans were too busy trying to keep warm to cause any trouble as Chicago beat Kansas City.

One night after a fan ran out of the stands and tried to tackle umpire Laz Diaz, the focus was back on baseball at U.S. Cellular Field.

There was a noticeable increase in security, with 16 guards ringing the field during the half-inning breaks. Guards also stood near both dugouts, and others roamed the stands.

Angels 9, Rangers 8

ARLINGTON, Texas — Bengie Molina hit the go-ahead two-run single in a strange seven-run eighth inning that gave Anaheim a victory over Texas.

The Angels sent 12 batters to the plate and scored four unearned runs in their rally. They benefited from a disputed play in which Tim Salmon slid into the infield grass to avoid a tag and a two-out error that allowed the tying run to score.

National League

matched its longest winning streak of the season at just two.

Cubs 10, Reds 4

CHICAGO — Sammy Sosa hit his 502nd home run, a three-run shot in the first inning, as Chicago overcame a number of mistakes to beat Cincinnati.

Sosa's homer to center, his third of the season, was one of four hit by Chicago. Damian Miller, Free Seop Choi of South Korea and Moises Alou had the others.

Carlos Zambrano (2-1) pitched six erratic innings for the victory.

He hit two batters, walked three and made an error.

The teams combined for 18 walks, three errors, four wild pitches, and went through 11 pitchers.

Pirates 6, Mets 3

PITTSBURGH — Kevin Young's pinch-hit single in the sixth inning drove in the go-ahead run as Pittsburgh, getting a third straight effective outing from Jeff Suppan, beat New York.

The Mets finally got their first extra-base hit and first RBI from Mike Piazza — a solo homer in his 36th at-bat of the season — but still lost their seventh in eight games.

The Pirates scored more than three runs for the first time in 10 games to withstand three infield errors and end a three-game losing streak.

Third baseman Aramis Ramirez, who had two errors, also hit his first homer,

a solo shot in the first off David Cone (1-2).

Suppan (3-0) limited the Mets to two runs, one earned, and four hits in six innings to win his third consecutive start.

Marlins 3, Phillies 1

PHILADELPHIA — Brad Penny allowed just two hits in seven shutout innings and Ivan Rodriguez scored twice as Florida broke a three-game losing streak with a victory over Philadelphia.

Penny (2-1) struck out eight and walked three for the Marlins, who won on the road for the first time since April 5, a four-game slide.

Vladimir Nunez escaped a bases-loaded jam in the eighth inning and Braden Looper got three outs for his second save. He has converted 15 straight chances dating to last season.

Astros 8, Giants 5

SAN FRANCISCO — Jeff Kent hit a two-run double against his former team and Craig Biggio connected for a three-run homer as Houston sent San Francisco to just its second loss of the season.

Brad Lidge, Octavio Dotel and Billy Wagner combined for five shutout innings in relief for the Astros, who rallied from a 5-0 deficit to avoid a three-game sweep.

The Giants (13-2) had their six-game winning streak snapped and failed to match the 1918 New York Giants (18-1) for the best start in franchise history.

After the Astros tied it with a five-run

Darin Erstad and Salmon had consecutive RBI singles in the eighth, making it 6-4 before Garret Anderson hit what the Rangers thought was an inning-ending double play grounder.

Shortstop Alex Rodriguez, who hit two homers, fielded the ball on the first base side of second base and made a charge at Salmon, who slid down. Rodriguez then threw to first thinking he had completed a double play. Instead, umpire Jerry Layne ruled against the argument that Salmon had left the baseline.

Athletics 4, Mariners 1

SEATTLE — Tim Hudson outpitched Freddy Garcia again as Oakland ended a six-game losing streak with a victory over Seattle.

Eric Chavez gave Hudson (2-1) all the offense he needed with a two-run home run in the first inning, his second homer in two nights and his third of the season.

Erubiel Durazo hit a two-run homer in the ninth off Giovanni Carrara, Seattle's second pitcher.

The Mariners had a four-game winning string broken.

Hudson beat Seattle and Garcia for the second time this season, limiting the Mariners to five singles and no walks, with seven strikeouts in eight innings.

Keith Foulke pitched the ninth for his fourth save.

Garcia (1-3) gave up two runs on four hits and four walks, with three strikeouts in seven-plus innings.

From The Associated Press

Cardinals 15, Brewers 2

MILWAUKEE — Scott Rolen hit a pair of two-run homers and Matt Morris pitched six solid innings and hit his first major league home run Wednesday at St. Louis beat Milwaukee.

The Brewers managed only one unearned run off Morris (1-1).

Pitching his third consecutive strong game, Morris scattered five hits while walking four and striking out seven.

One start after beating Arizona's Randy Johnson, Milwaukee starter Wayne Franklin (1-2) gave up nine earned runs on eight hits and three walks in 3²/₃ innings.

Albert Pujols, returning after missing Tuesday night's game with a bruised right thumb, had two singles, a double, two RBIs and scored twice. Mike Matheny drove in three runs with a single and a double.

Braves 3, Expos 2

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Rookie Horacio Ramirez shut out Montreal until the eighth inning and Gary Sheffield homered to lead a revived Atlanta over the Expos.

Swept at home by Montreal in a three-game series to start the season, Atlanta is rapidly getting even with the Expos in Puerto Rico. And the Braves are doing it in familiar fashion — with dominant pitching.

Ramirez (2-2) blanked the Expos until Ron Calloway's two-run homer in the eighth, beating the team that defeated him two weeks ago in his major league debut.

Andruw Jones doubled, singled twice and drove in two runs. John Smoltz earned his fifth save as Atlanta

fifth, pinch-hitter Orlando Merced drove in the go-ahead run with a single in the seventh.

Kent, the 2000 National League Most Valuable Player who helped lead San Francisco to the World Series last season, went 2-for-9 with three RBIs in his first series back at Pacific Bell Park.

Diamondbacks 4, Rockies 3

PHOENIX — Luis Gonzalez singled home the winning run as Arizona rallied for three runs in the ninth inning to beat Colorado.

David Dellucci, who entered in the ninth after Danny Bautista left with an injured hip flexor, singled in two runs off Jose Jimenez to tie it at 3-3.

Jimenez (0-2) blew a save for the first time in five opportunities as Colorado lost to the Diamondbacks for the first time in six meetings this season.

Matt Mantei (3-0) pitched a scoreless ninth to get the victory.

Randy Johnson missed his scheduled start because of swelling under his right kneecap.

Dodgers 3, Padres 0

LOS ANGELES — Japan's Kazuhisa Ishii allowed three hits in seven innings, and slumping Fred McGriff hit a two-run double to cap a three-run sixth as Los Angeles beat San Diego.

The Dodgers had lost each of their previous four games by one run.

Ishii (1-1) walked three and struck out five. The Padres loaded the bases with one out in the eighth before Paul Quantrill struck out Mark Kotsay and Rondell White to end the inning.

Eric Gagne pitched the ninth for his third save in as many chances.

From The Associated Press

BASKETBALL

TORONTO — Lenny Wilkens is out as coach of the Toronto Raptors, leaving Thursday by "mutual agreement" after the worst season of his 30-year NBA career.

Wilkens, who owns the league's career records for most victories (1,292) and losses (1,114) by a coach, went 24-58 this season.

Toronto finished seventh in the eight-team Central Division.

He had one season left on his contract with the Raptors, who will pay him what's due after reaching what they called "a mutual agreement that concludes Wilkens' coaching tenure with the team."

Sports in brief

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas point guard T.J. Ford was taken to a hospital by ambulance after being injured in a pickup basketball game at a campus gym.

Ford was undergoing further evaluation, mostly for precautionary reasons, team spokesman Scott McConnell said. He would not provide further detail, citing federal privacy laws.

Ford was at St. David's Hospital, near the campus, where he was being examined in the emergency room.

He said Ford was conscious when he arrived and might have had a collision with another player. There were no coaches or trainers on the scene when he was injured.

BASEBALL

CHICAGO — Major League Baseball is reviewing security at ballparks nationwide to try to prevent fan violence after the attack on an umpire at a White Sox game.

Top baseball officials were in Chicago to investigate the assault on first base umpire Laz Diaz, which raised concern and questions throughout the majors.

The attack came during the game between the White Sox and Kansas City Royals on Tuesday night — three months before U.S. Cellular Field hosts the All-Star game and about seven months after a similar attack on a first base coach at the stadium.

In a Chicago police report, the fan was identified as 24-year-old Eric Dybas of Bolingbrook, Ill. He was charged with aggravated battery and criminal trespassing.

From The Associated Press

Jordan era ends with 20-point loss in Philly

BY ROB MAADDI
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Michael Jordan sat on the bench, smiling and joking with teammates as the sellout crowd chanted, "We want Mike! We want Mike!"

Though he didn't want to go back in, Jordan wouldn't disappoint the fans in the final game of his NBA career.

Jordan pulled off his warmups, received yet another lengthy ovation, went back on the court, and was purposely fouled by Eric Snow. Fittingly, Jordan made his final two shots — both free throws.

One of the greatest players in NBA history, Jordan then exited for good with 1:44 remaining in the fourth quarter of Washington's 107-87 loss to Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

Another standing ovation followed, this one including the coaches and other players. Jordan flashed his familiar wide smile, waved to the crowd and took a seat on the bench one last time.

"It's time to move on," Jordan said. "It's easier to accept that because physically I know it and feel it."

Jordan finished with 15 points, four rebounds and four assists in 28 minutes — drawing several adoring ovations from a Philly crowd notorious for its boorish behavior.

The fans did boo, but only when they thought Jordan wasn't coming back into the game. He went to the bench with 4:13 left in the third quarter, and didn't return until 2:35 remained in the game.

With the Sixers ahead by 21 points and 9½ minutes left, the chants of "We want Mike!" started. The chant grew louder as the period progressed with Jordan remaining seated, and fans ignored the game to stand and stare at the Wizards' bench, wondering why Jordan wasn't playing.

"The game didn't merit me going back in," Jordan said. "Obviously, they wanted to see me make a couple of baskets. That was very, very respectful."

While the fans implored Jordan to return, Wizards coach Doug Collins pleaded with him.

"He really didn't want to, but I said, 'Michael, please, you got to go out there,'" Collins said.

Michael Jordan's career stats

COLLEGE						
Year, Team	G	FG	FT	Reb	Pts	PPG
1981-82, N.Carolina	34	.534	.722	149	460	13.5
1982-83, N.Carolina	36	.535	.737	197	721	20.0
1983-84, N.Carolina	31	.551	.779	163	607	19.6
Totals	101	.540	.748	509	1788	17.7

NBA Regular Season						
Year, Team	G	FG	FT	Reb	Ast	PPG
1984-85, Chicago	82	.515	.845	534	481	28.2
1985-86, Chicago	18	.457	.840	64	53	22.7
1986-87, Chicago	82	.482	.857	430	377	37.1
1987-88, Chicago	82	.535	.841	449	485	35.0
1988-89, Chicago	81	.538	.850	652	650	32.5
1989-90, Chicago	82	.526	.848	565	519	33.6
1990-91, Chicago	82	.539	.851	492	453	31.5
1991-92, Chicago	80	.519	.832	511	489	30.1
1992-93, Chicago	78	.495	.837	522	428	32.6
1994-95, Chicago	17	.411	.801	117	90	26.9
1995-96, Chicago	82	.495	.834	543	352	30.4
1996-97, Chicago	82	.486	.833	482	352	29.6
1997-98, Chicago	82	.465	.784	475	283	28.7
2001-02, Washington	60	.416	.790	339	310	22.9
2002-03, Washington	82	.445	.820	497	311	20.0
Totals	1072	.497	.835	6179	5326	30.1

Playoffs						
Year, Team	G	FG	FT	Reb	Ast	PPG
1984-85, Chicago	4	.436	.828	23	34	29.3
1985-86, Chicago	3	.505	.872	19	17	43.7
1986-87, Chicago	3	.417	.897	21	18	35.7
1987-88, Chicago	10	.531	.869	71	47	36.3
1988-89, Chicago	17	.510	.799	119	130	34.8
1989-90, Chicago	16	.514	.836	115	109	36.7
1990-91, Chicago	17	.524	.845	108	142	31.1
1991-92, Chicago	22	.499	.857	137	127	34.5
1992-93, Chicago	19	.475	.805	128	114	35.1
1994-95, Chicago	10	.484	.810	65	45	31.5
1995-96, Chicago	18	.459	.818	89	74	30.7
1996-97, Chicago	19	.456	.831	150	91	31.1
1997-98, Chicago	21	.462	.812	107	74	32.4
Totals	179	.487	.828	1152	1022	33.4

Jordan's final points were scripted, with Snow fouling him in the backcourt for no apparent reason except to send him to the line.

"Coach [Larry Brown] told me to foul him, get him to the line to get some points and get him out of there," Snow said.

After both foul shots went in, the Wizards committed a foul a second later so that Jordan could be removed from the game and receive the proper send-off. In a rare scene, the players on the court turned to Jordan and applauded, too.

The 40-year-old Jordan would have

preferred to end his career in the playoffs, but the Wizards never clicked during his two years in Washington and finished 37-45 in both seasons.

But that was merely a footnote on a stirring night in which the basketball public watched one of the greatest athletes in history playing the game one final time.

Jordan finished his career with 32,292 points — the third-highest total in league history, behind Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Karl Malone. Jordan's career average of 30.12 goes down as the best in NBA history, just ahead of Wilt Chamberlain's 30.07.

"I never, never took the game for granted. I was very true to the game, and the game was very true to me. It was just that simple," Jordan said.

Earlier in the game, Jordan showed his age.

There was a play in the first quarter when he looked like the Jordan of old, except for the result. Starting near the foul line, Jordan ducked his shoulder, lowered his head, stuck out his tongue and drove to his right, the ball rolling off his fingers ever so softly as it arched toward the net.

Rather than going in, though, the ball hit the front of the rim and missed — one of several of his shots that came up a few inches short.

One of the exceptions was Jordan's final shot of the first half — a one-handed dunk that came after he received a nice pass under the basket from Bobby Simmons.

Jordan hit his first two shots of the third quarter but didn't do much else positive in the period. On an alley-oop pass from Tyrone Lue, the ball hit him in the fingertips and bounced harmlessly away. A lazy cross-court pass was picked off by Aaron McKie, leading to one of Philadelphia's 31 fast-break points.

Jordan's final field-goal attempt was a missed layup with 8:13 remaining.

"I'm not embarrassed," Jordan said, "but it's just not ... I've had better feelings in terms of playing a competitive game."

Allen Iverson scored 35 points as the Sixers clinched home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs. They open against New Orleans on Sunday night.

Many people in the crowd wore Jordan replica jerseys, including one small boy in an oversized black Bulls jersey who wasn't looking when Jordan, about to inbound the ball, tussled his hair as the boy walked along the sideline. When the child turned around, he was stunned.

The 76ers had a couple of pregame surprises for Jordan, presenting him with a golf cart driven onto the court by Moses Malone and Julius Erving, then having longtime Chicago Bulls public address announcer Ray Clay introduce Jordan with his familiar inflection of "From North Carolina ..."

season with his league-leading 63rd double-double. The Timberwolves also got 17 points from Wally Szczerbiak, 14 from Anthony Peeler and 12 from Marc Jackson.

Memphis was led by Stromile Swift and Pau Gasol with 18 points each.

Mavericks 93, Spurs 72

SAN ANTONIO — Dirk Nowitzki scored 25 points to lead Dallas past San Antonio, giving the Mavericks their first 60-win season.

The victory ensured that Dallas, the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference, will have a home-court advantage if it reaches the second round of the playoffs.

The Spurs clinched the top seed in the conference on Monday and played without starters Tim Duncan and Stephen Jackson, who were placed on the injured list Wednesday.

Steve Smith, starting in place of Jackson, led San Antonio with 11 points.

Rockets 89, Nuggets 84

DENVER — Steve Francis had 17 points and nine assists, and Chinese rookie Yao Ming had 13 points and 16 rebounds as Houston beat Denver.

Houston won three straight games and five of their past seven to close out the season, but missed the playoffs for the fourth successive year.

Continued on Page 8

Celtics 99, Pistons 92

BOSTON — Tony Delk scored 17 points before sitting out the fourth quarter with the rest of the starters as Boston beat Detroit in a tuneup for the playoffs.

Detroit, the No. 1 seed in the East, will open the playoffs against Orlando. The Celtics had previously clinched the sixth spot in the East, and they will play at Indiana.

Mark Blount came off the bench to score 11 points and grab nine rebounds for Boston. Danny Manning scored 18 and Mehmet Okur had nine rebounds for the Pistons.

Cavaliers 96, Raptors 86

CLEVELAND — Rookie Tierre Brown had 16 points and nine assists as Cleveland beat Toronto.

Rafer Alston scored 23 points and Chris Jefferies had 13 for injury-plagued Toronto, which dressed just eight players for their final four games.

Bucks 93, Magic 87

MILWAUKEE — Tim Thomas scored 21 points and Desmond Mason had 19 as Milwaukee beat Orlando for its eighth victory in nine games.

The Bucks secured the seventh seed in the Eastern Conference and will face New Jersey in the first round of the playoffs. Orlando got the eighth seed

and will play the top-seeded Detroit Pistons.

Michael Redd added 18 points for the Bucks and Mason finished with 11 assists.

Darrell Armstrong led the Magic with 15 points and Pat Burke had 14, including 12 in the third quarter. Drew Gooden had 13.

Pacers 90, Nets 83

INDIANAPOLIS — Al Harrington finished one assist short of his first triple-double with 17 points and 12 rebounds, as Indiana beat New Jersey to secure third place in the Eastern Conference.

The Pacers had already earned home-court advantage in the first round, but needed a victory or a Philadelphia loss to gain a spot in the standings.

Jermaine O'Neal had 26 points and 10 rebounds, Jamaal Tinsley had 10 points and 12 assists and Ron Artest added 16 points for the Pacers. Anthony Johnson led the Nets with 16 points and Aaron Williams added 14.

Hornets 92, Hawks 77

NEW ORLEANS — Baron Davis scored 21 points as New Orleans defeated Atlanta to finish the regular season with a five-game winning streak.

NBA

Jamal Mashburn had 15 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for his third career triple-double.

The Hawks were trying to extend a four-game winning streak, but turned the ball over 23 times, leading to 31 Hornets points.

Dion Glover led Atlanta with 15 points and 11 rebounds, while Jason Terry added 13 points and eight assists. Robert Traylor had a season-high 15 points, 13 in the fourth quarter when New Orleans pulled away.

Timberwolves 95, Grizzlies 87

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Minnesota clinched home-court advantage in the opening round of the playoffs for the first time in their history with a victory over Memphis.

Kevin Garnett had 19 points, 16 rebounds and eight assists to lead Minnesota, which ended the season 51-31 to take the No. 4 spot in the Western Conference.

Getting home court, for at least one round, gives the Timberwolves a fighting chance in the packed West. Minnesota has never made it to the second round of the playoffs, getting eliminated six straight times.

Garnett capped a sensational regular

NHL

Mighty Ducks 3,
Red Wings 2 (OT)

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Steve Rucchin scored at 6:53 of overtime Wednesday as Anaheim eliminated Stanley Cup champion Detroit.

Jean-Sebastien Giguere made 32 saves in the stunning four-game sweep of the opening-round Western Conference series.

The Red Wings, Stanley Cup champions three of the past six years, became just the second defending Cup winner to be swept the following season in a four-game opening series.

In 1952, Detroit upset the 1951 champion Toronto Maple Leafs and went on to win the Cup.

Rucchin scored his first goal of the series with a one-timer from 10 feet after defenseman Keith Carney passed the puck from behind the net.

Jason Krog and Paul Kariya scored the other goals for the Ducks, who had been swept out of the playoffs by Detroit in their only two previous trips to the postseason in 1997 and 1999.

Giguere gave up a game-tying goal to Sergei Fedorov with 2:15 remaining in regulation, and an earlier score to Henrik Zetterberg on a two-man breakaway at 13:23 of the first period.

Krog had scored with 15:25 left in the third period to give Anaheim a 2-1 lead.

Lightning 3, Capitals 1

WASHINGTON — Martin St. Louis scored two goals as Tampa Bay beat Washington to even the first-round playoff series at 2-2.

Game 5 in the best-of-seven series is Friday in Tampa Bay, which might or might not be good for the Lightning. The home team has lost every game in the series — in fact, no home team has even had a lead.

Vincent Lecavalier also scored for the Lightning. Peter Bondra had the only goal for Washington, which led the Eastern Conference series 2-0.

The Capitals now have to deal with an ugly past they thought was long buried. They were the NHL's collapse artists in the 1990s, blowing a two-game series lead three times from 1992-96.

Senators 3, Islanders 1

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — Mike Fisher scored just 28 seconds in, and Marian Hossa had a goal and an assist as Ottawa took a 3-1 lead in the series.

Anton Volchenkov also scored, and Patrick Lalime made 21 saves for the Senators. They'll try to wrap up the best-of-seven Eastern Conference series at home Thursday night.

Adrian Aucoin scored for the Islanders, who have lost three straight after winning the opening game of the series.

The teams were coming off a double-overtime game Monday night that lasted 82 minutes, 25 seconds. But Ottawa came out energized in the first period, scoring two quick goals and outshooting New York 15-6.

Avalanche 3, Wild 1

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Colorado's Joe Sakic took the edge off another loud crowd with two goals in the game's first eight minutes, and Patrick Roy barely missed his second straight shut-out.

The Avalanche, who finished the regular season by winning 25 of their final 37, lead this best-of-seven Western Conference quarterfinal series 3-1.

The Avs, who also got a goal from Dan Hinote, will try to end the series in Denver on Saturday. Marian Gaborik had the goal for Minnesota, making its postseason debut.

Roy was pelted early, but nothing the Wild put on net would go in until Gaborik's power-play goal with 2:40 remaining cut the lead to 2-1. That ended a string of almost 118 scoreless minutes for Minnesota.

Blues 4, Canucks 1

ST. LOUIS — Martin Rucinsky had two goals and an assist as St. Louis rallied from a flat start to beat Vancouver and take a 3-1 lead in their series.

Dallas Drake and Chris Pronger scored in the second period after the Canucks grabbed a goal. Rucinsky scored twice in 1:37 late in the third for the Blues.

St. Louis, which got a strong game from goalie Chris Osgood to offset a 33-20 shots deficit, can close out the series in Game 5 on Friday night in Vancouver.

Trailing early is normal for the Blues, a league-leading 22-15-3-6 when giving up the game's first goal in the regular season.

The Canucks, whose goal came from Markus Naslund, were second in the NHL with 264 in the regular season. But they have been outscored 14-4 in the first four games.

Flyers 3,
Maple Leafs 2 (3OT)

TORONTO — Mark Recchi scored his second goal of the game with 6:06 remaining in the third overtime period to give Philadelphia a series-evening victory over Toronto.

Ed Belfour made 72 saves before Recchi's wrist shot from the faceoff circle hit the goalie's stick and barely trickled over the goal line, as the Flyers evened the best-of-seven Eastern Conference playoff series at 2-2. Game 5 is Saturday in Philadelphia.

Jeremy Roenick also scored for the Flyers.

Travis Green and Mats Sundin scored for the Leafs, who were without leading scorer Alexander Mogilny. Clipped under the jaw by a stick two nights earlier, Mogilny was advised by team doctors to sit out. He'll be re-examined Thursday.

The Flyers outshot the Leafs 75-38, setting a Philadelphia playoff record for shots on goal.

From The Associated Press

Scores/standings

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-New Jersey	49	33	.598	—
x-Philadelphia	48	34	.585	1
x-Boston	44	38	.537	5
x-Orlando	42	40	.512	7
Washington	37	45	.451	12
New York	37	45	.451	12
Miami	25	57	.305	24

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
z-Detroit	50	32	.610	—
x-Indiana	48	34	.585	2
x-New Orleans	47	35	.573	3
x-Milwaukee	42	40	.512	8
Atlanta	35	47	.427	15
Chicago	30	52	.366	20
Toronto	24	58	.293	26
Cleveland	17	65	.207	33

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
z-San Antonio	60	22	.732	—
x-Dallas	60	22	.732	—
x-Minnesota	51	31	.622	9
x-Utah	47	35	.573	13
Houston	43	39	.524	17
Memphis	28	54	.341	32
Denver	17	65	.207	43

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Sacramento	59	23	.720	—
x-L.A. Lakers	50	32	.610	9
x-Portland	50	32	.610	9
x-Phoenix	44	38	.537	15
Seattle	40	42	.488	19
Golden State	38	44	.463	21
L.A. Clippers	27	55	.329	32

x-clinched playoff spot

y-clinched division

z-clinched conference

Wednesday's games

Boston 99, Detroit 92
Cleveland 96, Toronto 86
Philadelphia 107, Washington 87
Milwaukee 93, Orlando 87
Indiana 90, New Jersey 83
Minnesota 95, Memphis 87
Dallas 93, San Antonio 72
New Orleans 92, Atlanta 77
Houston 89, Denver 84
Sacramento 95, Utah 84
Seattle 84, Phoenix 70
L.A. Clippers 107, Portland 93
L.A. Lakers 117, Golden State 111

End of Regular Season

NHL Playoffs

FIRST ROUND

(Best-of-seven)

Wednesday

Tampa Bay 3, Washington 1, series tied 2-2

Ottawa 3, N.Y. Islanders 1, Ottawa leads series 3-1

Colorado 3, Minnesota 1, Colorado leads series 3-1

St. Louis 4, Vancouver 1, St. Louis leads series 3-1

Philadelphia 3, Toronto 2, 3OT, series tied 2-2

Anaheim 3, Detroit 2, OT, Anaheim wins series 4-0

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	11	3	.786	—
Boston	9	5	.643	2
Toronto	6	9	.400	5½
Baltimore	5	8	.385	5½
Tampa Bay	5	9	.357	6

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Kansas City	11	2	.846	—
Chicago	8	6	.571	3½
Minnesota	8	6	.571	3½
Cleveland	5	9	.357	6½
Detroit	1	12	.077	10

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Anaheim	8	7	.533	—
Oakland	8	7	.533	—
Seattle	8	7	.533	—
Texas	6	9	.400	2

Wednesday's games

Boston 6, Tampa Bay 4
Baltimore 4, Cleveland 3
Minnesota 4, Detroit 2
Chicago White Sox 4, Kansas City 3
Toronto 7, N.Y. Yankees 6
Anaheim 9, Texas 8
Oakland 4, Seattle 1

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Montreal	9	6	.600	—
Philadelphia	9	6	.600	—
Atlanta	7	8	.467	2
Florida	7	9	.438	2½
New York	5	10	.333	4

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	9	6	.600	—
Houston	8	6	.571	½
Pittsburgh	8	6	.571	½
St. Louis	8	6	.571	½
Cincinnati	5	10	.333	4
Milwaukee	5	10	.333	4

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	13	2	.867	—
Colorado	9	6	.600	4
San Diego	7	8	.467	6
Los Angeles	6	9	.400	7
Arizona	4	11	.267	9

Wednesday's games

St. Louis 15, Milwaukee 2
Chicago Cubs 10, Cincinnati 4
Atlanta 3, Montreal 2
Pittsburgh 6, N.Y. Mets 3
Florida 3, Philadelphia 1
Houston 8, San Francisco 5
Arizona 4, Colorado 3
Los Angeles 3, San Diego 0

From The Associated Press

Continued from Page 7

Denver lost eight straight and 14 of 17 to end its eighth consecutive losing season. The Nuggets tied Cleveland for the worst record in the NBA and will have an equal shot with the Cavaliers to win the top pick in this year's draft.

Both teams will have 225 pingpong balls in the May 22 lottery, with the winner expected to take Ohio high school phenom LeBron James.

SuperSonics 84, Suns 70

SEATTLE — Ray Allen scored 19 points as Seattle topped Phoenix.

The Suns, looking ahead to the post-season, rested most of their starting lineup for a second straight night. Only Amare Stoudamire saw significant playing time, finishing with 16 points and nine rebounds. Joe Johnson led Phoenix with 21 points.

Allen, who had scored more than 30 in three of the previous four games,

made 7-for-17 from the field. Brent Barry scored 14. Vladimir Radmanovic had 12 and Calvin Booth added 10 for the Sonics.

Kings 95, Jazz 84

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Chris Webber scored 15 points and Bobby Jackson had nine in the fourth quarter as Sacramento beat Utah in a low-key preview of their upcoming playoff series.

The Jazz and the Kings will begin their third playoff series in five years this weekend in Sacramento. Both teams played the regular-season finale conservatively, with reserves getting ample minutes into the tight fourth quarter.

The game was meaningless by half-time, when Dallas' victory over San Antonio cost Sacramento any chance at home-court advantage in a potential

second-round meeting with the Mavericks.

Karl Malone, the NBA's second-leading career scorer, had eight points in what might have been his final regular-season game with Utah. Malone has openly campaigned to join a Western Conference contender next season.

Clippers 107,
Trail Blazers 93

LOS ANGELES — Lamar Odom had 24 points and 13 rebounds as the Los Angeles Clippers defeated Portland to drop the playoff-bound Trail Blazers to sixth place in the Western Conference.

The loss means the Blazers will play Dallas in the first round.

Andre Miller added 19 points as five Clippers scored in double figures. Elton

Brand had 18 points and 11 rebounds. Keyon Dooling added 16 points and Marko Jaric had 13 points. The team shot 56 percent.

Bonzi Wells led Portland with 19 points and Rasheed Wallace added 15 points.

Lakers 117, Warriors 111

OAKLAND, Calif. — Kobe Bryant scored 44 points as the Los Angeles Lakers beat Golden State to earn the fifth seed in the Western Conference.

Shaquille O'Neal recorded his 46th double-double of the season with 27 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers, who will face fourth-seeded Minnesota in the first round of the playoffs. The Lakers have won 11 of their past 13 games.

Gilbert Arenas scored 33 points for the Warriors, who lost their fourth straight game. Mike Dunleavy added a career-high 21 points and Jason Richardson finished with 19. Antawn Jamison had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

From The Associated Press

NBA continued